



# CTC NEWSLETTER



Career Transition Center  
George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center  
U.S. Department of State

## FEBRUARY 2006

Feature Story: How to Follow Up an Interview 1

Editor's Notes: Role of Loved Ones in Job Search 4

Job Leads: Cultural Training 6

Attention JSP Grads 7



*"Do what you love,  
the money will follow."*

- Marsha Sinetar,  
U.S. author & educator



*"To love what you do  
and feel that it  
matters — how could  
anything else be more  
fun?"*

- Katharine Graham,  
U.S. newspaperwoman

## How to Follow Up an Interview Without Making a Pest of Yourself

By Eileen Gunn, published in *CareerJournal.com* and  
reprinted here with permission of *The Wall Street Journal*

Scott Boston began a job search in the summer of 2002, after taking a severance package and leaving his position as chief learning officer at BellSouth Corp. in Atlanta. He seemed fortunate when McKesson Corp., the pharmaceutical distributor based in San Francisco, asked him almost immediately to interview for a comparable job. Talks went well, and he was called back for a second interview...and a third... and a fourth. In all, he met with 12 managers, potential peers and would-be staff in six sessions in the next two months.

"The first time I walked in the door I knew I wanted to work for the company," he says. And with each interview, he became more emotionally invested in the job. "I was talking with people about the issues they're facing, and relating it to conversations I'd had with other people in the organization. I felt like... I was already there," he recalls.

Finally, he got an offer from McKesson and has just passed his one-year anniversary as its vice president for organizational capability. But for every successful job seeker like Mr. Boston, there are the candidates who go through the same drawn-out paces and make the emotional connections and don't get an offer. Companies are taking far longer to make hiring decisions than they did just a few years ago. And the higher up the ladder you seek to climb, the more hoops you can expect to jump through before knowing whether a job will be yours.

According to DBM, a consulting and outplacement unit of Thomson Corp., the average job candidate will interview five to seven times with a single company, often meeting with several people in each round. Outplacement counselors and ex-

ecutive recruiters say it's not unusual to see the selection process stretch out to six months. One public-relations executive in New York met with a company four times in 10 months before getting fed up with the delays and removing herself as a candidate.

So how do you keep your game face on and your enthusiasm up through marathon interview sessions interspersed by weeks of waiting? "So many things are out of your control during this process. You have to focus on taking care of the things that are in your control," says Sheila Basile, a senior vice president at Lee Hecht Harrison, another outplacement-counseling firm, in New Jersey.



*"The first step is to find out what you love — and don't be practical about it. The second step is to start doing what you love immediately, in any small way possible."*

*- Barbara Sher,  
U.S. career counselor & author*

### **Use the Time to Your Advantage**

The point of all these interviews is for employers to get to know your personality and work style to ensure you'll fit in. "They want to know that everyone, from the people you'll be managing to the other department heads, will be on board about working with you," says Leslie Bonagura, a counselor with DBM in

Stamford, Conn. But you can be picking up useful clues as well.

"Asking a lot of questions about the people you meet and about the company is going to make you more engaged. It feeds your enthusiasm," notes Conrad Prusak, the president of Ethos Consulting, an executive-recruiting firm in San Francisco. "You're starting to develop relationships even before you're inside."

Mr. Boston concurs. After starting his job, "early on, I could pick up the phone and immediately engage people because I'd already spent time talking with them. I knew they knew who I was and what I was about."

And even if you don't land the job, the time could end up being well spent. Sandy Tronier, who is based in New York, went on 43 sets of interviews with 17 companies this past summer while seeking a job as an account executive in the litigation-support industry. She received seven offers and now works for Document Technology, based in Mobile, Ala. The cycle of conference calls followed by in-person interviews in different cities was frustrating and expensive. But, she says, "I know all of my competitors really well now, which helps when we're going up against them for business."

### **Keep in Touch, But Not Too Much**

"There needs to be a higher level of respect for communication when things drag on, but you can't expect the company to nurture the communication, it's up to you to do that," notes Steve Mader, a recruiter in the Boston office of the search firm Christian & Timbers. The

challenge is to keep over-eagerness at bay, so you can keep yourself on their minds without being a pest.

Recruiters and job-search counselors suggest ending every phone call or round of meetings with questions about what's ahead: What else do they need from you? When should you expect to hear and with whom can you check in if you don't hear back by then?

For instance, Mr. Prusak explains, knowing that the hiring manager will be out of town for most of the next month will keep you from getting anxious after a week or two of no news. And it will help you judge how much additional e-mailing and phoning to do.

"Reaching out once a week is probably too much," notes Ms. Bonagura. "If the day after you meet a person you see a magazine article you really think they'd be interested in, it's probably OK to send it along right away," perhaps with a note explaining how it's given you a different perspective on a problem you discussed. But, she adds, "wait a little while before touching base again."



*"All work is empty save  
when there is love."*

*- Kahlil Gibran,  
Lebanese-American author*

## Have a Waiting Strategy

At some point, you'll just have to wait to hear something, or cool your heels until a reasonable amount of time has passed before checking in. "It's like dancing partners who are moving at two different tempos; you and the company have different priorities," notes Lee Ann Howard, co-founder of the recruiting firm Howard & O'Brien in Cleveland.

Mr. Prusak suggests candidates fill time by continuing their job hunting. "If this job doesn't come through, you don't want to have to restart your search after four months of focusing on one thing," he says. "And at best, maybe you'll wind up with another offer to use as leverage." However, he cautions against going too far in using other offers to pressure a company you really want to work for.

"I had a fellow call me last week to say he'd gotten a verbal offer from someone else," he says. The candidate expected a written offer to follow within a week and, "he wanted to know if my client was at all able to move forward faster." The company was. "We moved ahead on things we hadn't been planning to deal with that week and did make a counteroffer, so the guy got the result he wanted," the recruiter explains. "But he did it in a nice way. If he'd waited until he had the written offer and said he needed to hear from us in 24 hours, we'd have told him to take the other deal."

If you're in a lull and not ready to chase down new leads during a long job search, then seek distractions. "I knew I was capable of being a pest, and I needed to keep my hand off the phone," Ms. Tronier recalls. "I'd bike from one

end of Manhattan to the other and then take a spinning class. By the time I came home, I was too tired to be interested in making phone calls."

The pressures to get to the end of a job hunt can be enormous -- mounting bills, waning self-confidence and the sheer need to feel productive. But, Mr. Prusak reminds candidates, "if you think about what's at stake for you and the company, in the grand scheme of things, four or five months is not a lot of time to spend getting to know each other."

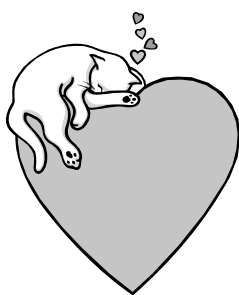
-- Ms. Gunn is a free-lancer in New York who writes about careers and management.



*"Your work is to discover your work  
and then with all your heart to give  
yourself to it."*

*- The Buddha, Indian religious leader*

## EDITOR'S NOTES



Now that Valentine's Day is coming, our thoughts may be turning to love and romance. So, your clever editor thought it would be a good time to address the relationship between the job

seeker and his or her Loved Ones.

In this case, "Loved Ones" could include your spouse or significant other, your immediate and extended family members, and/or your best friends. Let's talk about what these people can do for you and what you can do for them during your job search.

All the literature on job search stress encourages the job seeker to create their own support group or even groups. It is natural to think of your Loved Ones as one support group. They probably serve that role in many aspects of your life. Here are some of the ways they could support you during your job search:

- As a sounding board and reality checker for your dreams and goals as well as your doubts and concerns
- As a cheerleader for you, an encouraging and positive voice when you are discouraged
- As a source of suggestions and guidance on professional issues
- As part of your network and a medium through which you can expand your network
- As role-players during interview practices
- As diversions to get you away from all the job search chores and research
- As spell-checkers
- As fellow celebrants
- As sources of chocolate



*"When love and skill  
work together, expect a  
masterpiece."*

*- John Ruskin, English art critic,  
sociological writer, & essayist*

In order to keep your Loved Ones at their optimum, cheerleading best, you have to help them. These are some of the ways you can do that:

- Discuss your job search goals, plan, and strategy with them. Make sure they know that job searches can take months.
- If your goals involve relocation or other important changes, you must make that decision with your significant other.
- Discuss with them how they fit into your job search — as members of your support group, as part of your network, etc.
- Discuss with them how your job search may impact upon them. Find out what worries them most. This is especially important to immediate family members who may count on you as a bread winner. Include them in the financial planning.
- Try not to disrupt their lives too much. They aren't used to you being home. Don't make the kitchen table your office! Many of the experts who write on this subject recommend establishing an "office" outside the home, even if it's your regular table at Starbucks or a carrel at the local library.
- Keep them up to date on your search with regular reports. You may even want to schedule a regular weekly meeting for this, just so you don't forget. (Note: prayer, wine, and/or chocolate can certainly be included in these meetings!)
- Remember that they may mirror your own attitude. This is especially true of children. So, answer their questions honestly, but make an effort to stay positive and focused. Keep the inevitable set-backs you will encounter in the job search in perspective for you and for them. Be a good role model for your kids. They need to learn how to handle challenges in their own lives.
- Share with them — the comic moments (and never doubt there will be some!), the triumphs, the rejections, the new and interesting things you learn, etc. Let them share their concerns with you.
- Celebrate with them all the positive steps forward in your search, even if they are baby steps.
- Listen to them. They know you and love you. And you never know where the lead for the Perfect Job is going to come from!
- Allow them to help, to be part of this important period in your life. This can be something as small as posting a cover letter and resume or as big as role playing an interviewer in a practice session. Draw on their expertise, their experience, and their network. People need to feel needed.

- Appreciate them. Not only are they a good support group, but they will be fielding questions about your job search from other relatives and friends. Their expressions of confidence and optimism to that audience will save you from having to deal with it. (There's nothing like Aunt Bertha's "You don't have a job YET?!?!" to test your commitment to non-violence!)
- Hug them a lot. (It's even better than chocolate and has much less calories and fat.)

Make sure that your family understands that, even though you are technically unemployed, a job search is a fulltime job. You will need to devote a lot of time to that effort and will not always be available for extra domestic duties. And, if you keep them posted on your efforts throughout the search, that may reassure them that you are not just trying to duck out of housekeeping chores!

*"Work and love —  
these are the  
basics. Without them  
there is neurosis."*



*- Dr. Theodor Reik,  
American psychologist & author*

## JOB LEADS



If you are interested in cultural training programs, you might want to check out the companies below. Please note that

many of these companies hire consultants and send them to clients all over the world. So, do not be put off by the location of the company's headquarters. Even if their offices are not located in your hometown, you may be able to work for them.

Also note that these are only a few of many companies and organizations that offer cultural training.

A.C.E. Training and Development Institute—[www.cultural.org/ace](http://www.cultural.org/ace) (Seattle)

Berlitz—[www.berlitz.com](http://www.berlitz.com) (major cities worldwide)

Cultural Savvy (CS) -  
[www.culturalsavvy.com](http://www.culturalsavvy.com) (San Francisco)

Eaton Consulting Group—  
[www.eatonconsultinggroup.com](http://www.eatonconsultinggroup.com)  
(Copenhagen and Boston)

FGLworld—[www.fgiworld.com](http://www.fgiworld.com) (Canada, MN, CA, NJ, TX)

G. Douglas Lipp & Associates—  
[www.douglipp.com](http://www.douglipp.com) (CA)

Global Integration—[www.global-integration.com](http://www.global-integration.com) (England and OR)

Global Intercultural Services (GIS) -  
<http://globalintercultural.com> (New York)

Global Workforce Development —  
[www.prudential.com](http://www.prudential.com) (New York)

Graybridge Malkam—[www.malkam.com](http://www.malkam.com)  
(Ottawa)

Hodge International Advisors—  
[www.hodge-ia.com](http://www.hodge-ia.com) (WA)

Intercultural Insights—  
[www.interculturalinsights.com](http://www.interculturalinsights.com) (St. Louis,  
Missouri)

Intercultural Management Institute,  
American University—  
[www.imi.american.edu](http://www.imi.american.edu) (WashDC)

IOR Global Services—[www.iorworld.com](http://www.iorworld.com)  
(Chicago, Detroit, London, Amsterdam)

Language and Culture Worldwide, LLC  
(LCW) - [www.languageandculture.com](http://www.languageandculture.com)  
(Chicago and India)

Meridian Resources—  
[www.meridianglobal.com](http://www.meridianglobal.com) (San Fran-  
cisco)

Prudential Relocation's Intercultural  
Communicaid Global Communication—  
[www.communicaid.com](http://www.communicaid.com) (London, Paris,  
Frankfurt)

SoCoCo Intercultural—[www.sococo.com](http://www.sococo.com)  
(Princeton, NJ)

Spring Institute for Intercultural Learn-  
ing—[www.spring-institute.org](http://www.spring-institute.org) (Denver)

If any of you have had experience with  
any of these companies or similar com-  
panies, we would really like to hear all  
about it. Please contact the editor at  
[pittsa@state.gov](mailto:pittsa@state.gov).



*"Let us ... realize that the  
privilege to work is a gift, that  
the power to work is a  
blessing, that love of work is  
success."*

- David McKay, U.S. religious leader



## ATTENTION, JSP GRADS!

### Special Request

We would really like to hear  
your experiences with consulting. We  
want to include them in the newsletter  
and can print your accounts with or with-  
out your name. Real-life examples are  
especially welcome to our newest gradu-  
ates — and they would be super helpful  
to our JSP counselors and participants.

We are also looking for JSP Graduates  
who are currently working as independ-  
ent Consultants and would be willing to  
share their experience with one or more  
of our JSP classes in 2006 (March, Au-  
gust, October).

By independent Consultant, we mean:

- you created and operate your own consulting business, you work for yourself
- you have more than 2 active clients who pay you for your services
- you do not work all the time, just whenever you have a consulting job

If any of you match that criteria, please  
contact us. We would like to offer a  
panel of consultants who can advise our  
participants about the finer points of the  
profession, including:

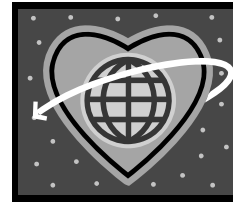
- Finding your niche in the local market
- Defining your services
- How you structured your business (schedule C, incorporated, etc.)
- How you set up your business—legal, financial, and other procedures
- Marketing your services, networking for new customers
- Setting and negotiating consulting fees

- Contracts and employment agreements

Please contact the editor if you are willing to be a confidential or public source of information on consulting:  
pittsa@state.gov or telephone 703-302-7412. A thousand thank you's!

### **Job Fair**

The next CTC Job Fair will be held on March 28, 2006 from 1 to 4 pm in the FSI Field House.



*"My father always told me, 'Find a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life.'"*

*- Jim Fox,  
U.S. guitarist & composer*



## **CTC NEWSLETTER**

FSI/TC/CTC

U.S. Department of State

Washington, D.C.

20522-4201

Editor: Amy Pitts

Telephone: 703-302-7412

Facsimile: 703-302-7416

E-mail: pittsa@state.gov

Website: [www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc](http://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc)